

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

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Dear WIC Coordinators

Greetings! It was great seeing you all at the WIC training meeting last month!

Limited staffing, staff vacancies, and developing a plan for the implementation of the new WIC food packages and new vendor requirements have placed us behind in sending out monitoring letters and in following up on vendor sanctions and vendor collections. While many of the policies concerning WIC warrant processing and vendor compliance are not entirely new, we have not implemented them with uniformity or consistency. We are working towards these and hope that with your help, we can move towards better compliance.

In the next few weeks, we will be sending vendor letters, with a cc to LA with jurisdiction over the particular vendor(s). Some letters would be notifications of vendor violations and corresponding sanctions, some letters will require that vendors respond by paying WIC for overcharges. Along with these, we plan to renew our efforts at providing vendor training to local agency staff and vendors. One of the ways we would deliver this training is through teleconferences with vendors and local agencies as well as newsletters and distribution of pamphlets and/or flyers. The topics we think of covering first include:

- vendor monitoring,
- minimum stocking requirements,
- WIC warrant processing procedures,
- not-to-exceed (NTE) limits,
- additional information on the new food packages and cash value vouchers.

Some of the topics listed here have been referenced at earlier teleconferences but not covered in any depth. By October 1, 2009, the USDA expects us to implement changes to the application of vendor sanctions and our sanction procedures. Our WIC Vendor Manual and Policy and Procedures Manual have been revised as required by the USDA. We are awaiting approval of our submissions and will share these materials with you as soon as they are approved. The following items would be significantly impacted:

- WIC Food List,
- WIC food packages
- Vendor sanctions,
- Minimum stocking requirements
- Cash-value vouchers

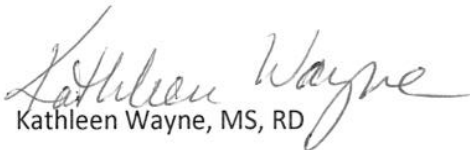
Reminder:

When conducting a vendor monitoring visit and you observe that the store has inadequate amount of any WIC item on the shelves, please bring this to the attention of the manager and verify if they have additional stock in storage and in what quantity. If that item has been ordered, ask for the delivery date. **Please note all this information in your report.** If the monitoring report does not contain this information, the vendor could receive sanction points for failing to maintain the minimum stocking requirements.

Thank you for all that you do in helping us ensure that WIC vendors have the training and support they need that allows them to comply with regulatory requirements.

If you would like us to cover a topic not listed above or if you have any questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wayne, MS, RD

State WIC Manager